

FROM THE ARMY ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE

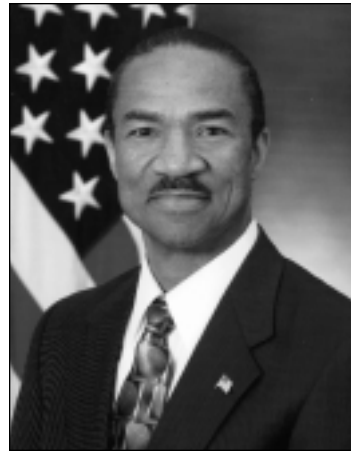
Transforming Army Personnel For The 21st Century

The Army has a non-negotiable contract with the American people to fight and win our Nation's wars—decisively. Our ability to do so, the Army's readiness, is linked directly to the well-being of its people—soldiers, civilians, and their families. That is why revamping our personnel infrastructure is an important part of the Army's enormous task of transforming to the Objective Force.

This issue of *Army AL&T* magazine examines several transformation initiatives underway within the personnel community including manning the Objective Force, man-machine interface, and the Army well-being initiative. We also learn more about the workings of the Army Personnel Transformation Task Force.

Clearly, our greatest strength is our people, and the soldier is at the center. In fact, the events following September 11, 2001, reinforced this. That is why recruiting, training, retaining, equipping, and providing for the soldier are paramount. GEN Creighton Abrams, who reconstructed the Army after the ravages of Vietnam, said it best: "The Army is not made of people, the Army is people. By people I do not mean personnel . . . I mean living, breathing, serving human beings. They have needs and interests and desires. They have spirit and will, strengths and abilities. They have weaknesses and faults; and they have means. They are the heart of our preparedness . . . and this preparedness—as a nation and as an Army—depends upon the spirit of our soldiers. It is the spirit that gives the Army . . . life. Without it we cannot succeed."

Today, America's soldiers are protecting our interests around the globe—from fighting in Afghanistan; to securing detainees in Cuba; to training counterterrorism forces in the Philippines, Yemen, and the former Soviet Republic of Georgia. Concurrently, our soldiers are continuing to deter potential adversaries in Southwest Asia and Korea while upholding U.S. security commitments in Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Sinai, and elsewhere.



More than 182,000 of our brave men and women are forward-stationed or deployed in 120 countries—on point for our Nation, protecting and promoting American interests.

The soldier is the Army's ultimate weapon, the crucial and integral component of the successful employment of all Army systems. During the Cold War, Army doc-

trine defined three distinct types of forces—heavy, light, and Special Forces. As we build the Objective Force, we have the opportunity to combine what is best from each of these.

From the heavy force, we have soldiers who know how to combine speed, overwhelming firepower, and combined arms operations to dominate opponents. From the light force, we have highly versatile soldiers who bring a rapid deployment mentality—rucks packed and ready to deploy worldwide on a few hours notice. From the Special Operations community, we have close combat specialists who are the best in the world at urban and night operations.

We have the greatest fighting force on Earth. We have the very best soldiers and they have the finest leaders. Our soldiers have world-class equipment, and they handle it with great ease because of their excellent training. We must work hard and work together to keep it that way.

In testimony to Congress earlier this year, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said, "If we are to win the war on terror, and prepare for the wars of tomorrow, we must take care of the Department's greatest asset: our men and women in uniform. 'Smart weapons' are worthless to us unless they are in the hands of smart soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines."

The Army family has changed during the last decade. Military and civilian personnel are more senior, more educated, and more diverse. More spouses work. Our transformation of personnel policies and programs must address these changing demographics and the expectations of a 21st century force. It is a tough challenge, but one in which the Army is leading the way.

Claude M. Bolton Jr.